

REMARKS

Please consider this paper as a request for continued examination and a petition for one-month extension of time. Please charge any deficiencies in fees to have this amendment and request for continued examination entered to our deposit account No. 500687.

Consideration and allowance of the subject application are respectfully requested.

Claims 16-31, 33 and 35-40 are pending in the application.

Basis for the amendment of claim 16 can be found in the originally filed application, including at page 3, line 36 through page 4, line 10. Figs. 2 and 3 show the entire relief of the figure being recessed in the light guiding material. Furthermore, one of ordinary skill in the art would understand from reading and comprehending the originally filed application at page 4, lines 6-7, that the language "this screen pattern that exists on **all** parts of the formed figure" requires that the laser beam vaporize the light guiding material over "all" (the entire) of the formed figure, thus, requiring that the entire relief of figure be recessed in the light guiding material.

Basis for the amendment of claims 21 and basis for new claims 36, 39 and 40 can be found in the originally filed application including at Fig. 4. Fig. 4 shows the fine mesh applied to a surface of the light guiding material such that the fineness is greater as the distance from the edge-illumination increases. Page 5, lines 12-28, of the originally filed application discloses that the fine mesh is applied to the surface of the light guiding material. No new matter has been added.

Basis for the amendment of claim 22 can be found in the originally filed application, including at page 5, line 16. Claim 31 has been amended to correct the antecedent basis. No new matter has been added.

Basis for new claims 36 and 37 can be found in the originally filed application at page 3, lines 19-23. No new matter has been added.

The rejection of claim 31 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, is obviated by the amendment to claim 31 as set forth above. Accordingly, withdrawal of the Section 112 rejection is respectfully requested.

The rejection of claim 21 under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,612,055 (Bradford) is respectfully traversed. The claimed invention is not anticipated by Bradford for the following reasons.

Bradford does not disclose that the "entire relief of the figure is recessed in the light guiding material." See Fig. 2 of Bradford, which clearly shows that portions of the relief of the figure are not recessed. Accordingly, withdrawal of the Section 102 rejection is respectfully requested.

The rejection of claims 16-20 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Bradford in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,407,361 (Williams) is respectfully traversed. The claimed invention is not obvious over the theoretical combination of Bradford and Williams for the following reasons.

The combination of Bradford and Williams does not teach or even suggest in the slightest that the "entire relief of the figure is recessed in the light guiding material." For this reason alone, the Section 103 rejection should be withdrawn.

The Examiner admits that Bradford does not teach "controlling the laser beam using a master program that makes the laser beam scan a line pattern at the same time as the laser beam is modulated by a frequency that controls the amplitude of the input power to the laser and thereby creates a screen pattern at the same time as an image program is superposed to control the amplitude and scanning frequency." Williams does not supply this deficiency of Bradford.

Williams only teaches three dimensional engraving. Williams does not teach forming a screen pattern. Williams only teaches applying a "constant laser power" in each layer. See column 3, line 22 of Williams. In contrast, in the present invention, the input power to the laser is "modulated by a frequency" to provide a varying depth, not a constant layer as in Williams. Furthermore, Williams specifically teaches to avoid varying the input power and, thus, teaches away from the claimed invention. See column 3, lines 26-32 of Williams.

For these reasons, the combination of Bradford and Williams does not teach or suggest the claimed invention. Accordingly, withdrawal of the Section 103 rejection is respectfully requested.

The rejection of claims 22-25 and 33 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Bradford in view of U.S. Patent No. 3,241,256 (Viret) is

respectfully traversed. The claimed invention is not obvious over the theoretical combination of Bradford and Viret for the following reasons.

Bradford does not teach "a fine mesh to the surface in which the fine mesh has a fineness proportional to the luminescence desired in different positions of the background and that the fineness is also proportional to the distance to the edge-illumination such **that the fineness is greater the greater the distance from the edge-illumination**" in combination with having fully recessed figures in the light guiding material facing the back of the sign. Viret does not provide the deficiencies of Bradford.

In Fig. 7 of Viret, the lamps 50 and 51 are shown illuminating the edges of the indicator. The dots 22 are shown being larger or more dense at a greater distance from the lamps 50 and 51. See also column 3, line 64 of Viret. However, Viret does not teach increasing the fineness of a mesh as the distance from the edge-illumination increases. For this reason alone, the Section 103 rejection should be withdrawn.

Even if Viret and Bradford were combined, the theoretical combination would not teach or suggest the claimed invention. The combination of Viret and Bradford would result in a very different sign in which a edge illumination (lamps 50 and 51 of Viret) are used to illuminate front facing figures that are not fully recessed in the light guiding material (Bradford) using a series of "holes" in which the size the dots increases different amounts (Viret). This is very different from the claimed invention in which the figures are rear facing, the figures are fully recessed in the light guiding material, and a mesh is used in which the fineness of the mesh increases as the distance from the edge-illumination increases.

Furthermore, the dots 22 of Viret would cover any figures in the sign of Bradford, since a continuous layer of dots 22 is shown in Fig. 7 of Bradford. In contrast, the claimed mesh is only on the surface of the light guiding material, not the figures which are recessed in the light guiding material.

In view of the differences between the claimed invention and the theoretical combination of references, withdrawal of the Section 103 rejection is respectfully requested.

The rejection of claims 26-28 and 35 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Bradford in view of Viret as applied to claim 25 above, and further

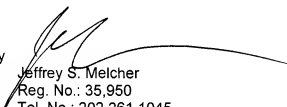
in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,166,332 (Donovan) is respectfully traversed. The claimed invention is not obvious over the theoretical combination of Bradford and Viret for the reasons provided above and Donovan does not supply the deficiencies of Bradford and Viret. Accordingly, withdrawal of the Section 103 rejection is respectfully requested.

The rejection of claims 29-31 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Bradford in view of Viret as applied to claim 23 above, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,028,828 (Chao) is respectfully traversed. The claimed invention is not obvious over the theoretical combination of Bradford and Viret for the reasons provided above and Chao does not supply the deficiencies of Bradford and Viret. Accordingly, withdrawal of the Section 103 rejection is respectfully requested.

In view of all of the rejections of record having been addressed, Applicant submits that the present application is in condition for allowance and notice to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,
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